



## Evidence-Based Practices for Parent to Parent Support Summary Document

Parent to Parent USA (P2PUSA) is a national non-profit organization committed to assuring access and quality in Parent to Parent support across the country. The following practices are based on research<sup>1</sup> and the knowledge of experienced Parent to Parent Program Directors.<sup>2</sup> Parent to Parent USA endorses the following practices:

### **Glossary of Terms**

- **Matching** – The act of formally connecting one parent to another parent for the purpose of receiving emotional and informational support. Formal matching involves connecting a parent to a Support Parent who has received training and ongoing support from a Parent Matching Program.
- **Parent to Parent Matching Program** – Programs that formally match a parent whose child has special needs to an experienced (veteran), trained Support Parent.\*
- **Support Parent** – Parents with children or youth who have special needs who have participated in specific skill-building or training session(s) in preparation for their role as Support Parent.
- **Referred Parent** – Parents with children or youth who have special needs who request to talk to another parent with similar experiences for the purpose of emotional and information support.

### **The Match**

#### ***Evidence-Based Practice***

- Criteria for the match are driven by the concerns, needs and priorities of the Referred Parent
- Matches are made within 24-48 hours of request\*
- Support Parent makes at least 4 contact within the first 8 weeks of receiving the match

#### ***Best Practice***

- The person facilitating the training coordinates the matches

### **Parent Matching Program**

#### ***Evidence-Based Practice***

- Maintains the capacity and/or ability to match families with diverse experiences including but not limited to ethnicity, culture, race, language, socio-economic, disability and other child/family related factors
- Provides support to match as needed

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<sup>1</sup> Singer, G.H.S., Marquis, J., Powers, L.K., Blanchard, L., DiVenere, N. Santelli, B., (1999) A Multi-site Evaluation of Parent to Parent Programs for Parents of Children with Disabilities. *Journal of Early Intervention*, Vol. 22, No 3. 217-229.

<sup>2</sup> Statewide Parent to Parent Director's Meeting Philadelphia, PA 2002.



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### ***Best Practice***

- Directed/coordinated by parent of child or youth who have special needs

### **Support Parent**

#### ***Evidence-Based Practice***

- Parent of child or youth with special needs
- Completed Skill-Building Support Parent Training(s)
- Complies with program requirements regarding availability to Support Program
- Participates in program evaluation

### **Referred Parent**

#### ***Evidence-Based Practice***

- Parent of a child or youth with special needs voluntarily comes to program requesting match
- Determines criteria for match
- Participates in program evaluation

### **Components of Support Parent Training**

#### ***Best Practice***

- Orientation to the program, matching and referral process
- active listening and communication skills
- self-reflection
- cultural diversity
- grief and adjustment processes
- community resources
- disability specific information
- positive philosophy
- self-awareness
- advocacy
- leadership
- confidentiality

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\* This document and subsequent materials developed by P2PUSA will use the term Support Parent to describe the role of an experienced, veteran supporting parent.